PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

Progressing Youth Participation in Armenia on Governance and Peace

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Contains 22 pages and 4 Annexes
24/03/2020
YEREVAN

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The overall purpose of this summative evaluation is to enhance the accountability of the implementers of the Project "*Progressing youth participation in Armenia on governance and peace"* of Peaceful Change initiative (PCi) and Youth Cooperation Centre of Dilijan (YCCD), carried out with the financial support of the United Kingdom (UK) Government's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) in the time period from April 01, 2019 to March 31, 2020. The project worked to introduce new ideas into the approaches of Armenian civil society and the Government of Armenia towards engaging with young people by convening discussions between officials and civil society representatives and by designing and testing new materials that could build the skills of young people to work in the framework of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250.

The PCi-YCCD project team worked with civil society organisations, government officials, members of the Armenian Parliament, education professionals, as well as young people from different backgrounds, particularly engaging young women and men in the remote borderline communities of Tavush region of Armenia, to promote the ideas of UNSCR 2250. The project was designed to ensure quantitative gender balance in activities and take appropriate measures to ensure the quality of female participation.

The standard DAC/OECD evaluation criteria were used for this evaluation purposes. Namely, the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability (to extent possible) were applied to assess inputs on the performance and future benefits, as well as to reveal the enabling and constraining factors. Per each evaluation criterion at least one evaluation question was selected from the list of standard evaluation questions of DAC/OECD and adapted to reflect the requirements of the Evaluation ToR in the Evaluation Matrix. The Evaluation Matrix served as the primary analytical tool for the present evaluation. The evaluation used a retrospective non-experimental qualitative design with the following data collection methods: desk-review of available documentation and reporting, group discussions and qualitative interviews with key stakeholders, implementers and beneficiaries.

The main findings and conclusions from the evaluation are presented as follows:

- The Project has largely achieved its intended results and objectives at the output level. All output indicator targets, except the target for number of state officials participating in the RTs, have been consistently met or exceeded throughout all project activities. However, their contribution to the achievement of the planned outcome and the accomplishment of broader strategic focus of CSSF is still in progress.
- The project advocacy and capacity building efforts resulted in the development of appropriate materials and youth policy recommendations to enhance participation of youth in decision making in Armenia and to promote understanding of UNSCR 2250.
- The team demonstrated an excellent flexibility and did not miss the windows of opportunity to successfully partner with the newly appointed Advisor to the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (ESCS) and the "YOU" Platform of youth organisations. These partnerships contributed greatly to overall effectiveness of the project, especially at the outcome level.
- The quality of female participation and the gender and conflict sensitivity approaches were considered in design and implementation of the project and were reflected in its final outputs to a significant extent. However, the project quantitative gender balance was skewed in favor of female engagement in all of the activities, which negatively affected the potential of reaching out to men with aggressive or militaristic conflict attitudes.
- It is impressive that the Project has been able to achieve significant results, monitor and document properly the progress and lessons learned, demonstrated best practice and innovation with relatively

few full-time staff. Increased number of full-time staff could have contributed to a more balanced distribution of multiple administrative tasks within the team and reducing the burden of local level planning. Consequently, some technical bottlenecks and minor inconveniences for the participants showed up at the local/regional level of project implementation.

- The project mostly succeeded in disbursing nearly 92% of its budget by end of the third quarter through the good use of bidding and selection exercises to ensure value for money principle. Yet, there were procurement and planning issues, identified by the donor that hindered to some extent the smooth implementation of the project and required more flexibility from the team to improve the challenging situations.
- The Project team has developed materials and enhanced national youth capacity that can be sustained in the long-term. The modules developed for the youth workshops will be used beyond the project lifespan across Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh by CSOs and youth activists to enhance their knowledge of conflicts. At the same time, there is a lack of readiness to use them for specific peacebuilding projects particularly supporting Nagorno-Karabakh conflict transformation, Armenia-Turkey normalisation process or any other aspects of foreign affairs. The materials produced, including the research and the manual, are available to be used and are in use as reference materials for civil society and youth organisations, but the potential for sustainable use of the research report was not realized by the project to its full extent.
- The project selected well-placed partners in the state and CSO levels who contribute to the long-term sustainability of project results and further policy-making in the country.

Following lessons learned are outlined by the evaluation:

1. *Planning of Events*: the planning of events should consider seasonal and other contexts. For instance, some of project activities organized in summertime overlapped with vacations and affected attendance and enrollment of officials and other decision makers. The duration of Roundtables (RT) should be adjusted to the needs of the most important stakeholders and should dedicate adequate timing for each participant to present their ideas. The agenda of the Study Visit was very full, and sometimes it was difficult to find time for reflection until the final day. More time to pause and prepare prior to every meeting could be useful both for the Study Visit and the Training of Trainers (ToT). Training sessions were conducted only on week-ends within a one-month period, which created long breaks between the sessions and proved to be problematic for both the participants and the trainers.

2. *Partnership and Selection of participants*: more efforts and time should be planned in advance to reach out to politicians and state officials. Partnerships with donor community, namely with the UN, the EU, etc., should be extensively explored to benefit from joint efforts. Formalization of partnerships, such as signing of memorandums of understanding could build a stronger ground for sustainability of cooperation. Targeted outreach to young men, especially those from more skeptically oriented groups, should become an important benchmark for peacebuilding projects.

3. *Procurement and Donor Requests:* possible mismatch between donor's rules and regulation and the implementer's guidelines should be considered in advance, with open discussion initiated with the donor. In case of subcontracting or procurement organized by local organizations, it is important to strengthen their procurement capacity and awareness on fraud and conflict-of-interest issues.

INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the methodology, the process of data collection and results from the evaluation of the project *"Progressing youth participation in Armenia on governance and peace"* (hereinafter, the Project) of Peaceful Change initiative (PCi) and Youth Cooperation Centre of Dilijan (YCCD) implemented with the financial support of the UK Government's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF). The overall purpose of this summative evaluation is to enhance the accountability of the implementers through assessment of major results and achievements of the Project in the time period from April 01, 2019 to March 31, 2020. This evaluation provides evidence-based recommendations to the PCi-YCCD partnership and the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Armenia to inform the design of their future projects on youth, peace and security.

More specifically, the evaluation:
- ➢ assessed the level of achievement of Project's outputs and outcomes as indicated in the project logical framework and the Theory of Change (ToC);
- ➢ examined how successful the Project was at achieving its targets for each of the key output/outcome indicators in line with project's result framework;
- ➢ assessed the overall effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability (to extent possible) of the Project and its contribution to the peacebuilding issues in Armenia;
- ➢ assessed the extent to which gender and conflict sensitivity approaches were considered in design and implementation;
- ➢ identified the lessons learned and good practices for consideration of the implementers and the donor.

This document is prepared as a major deliverable, defined under the contract, signed between the YCCD and the independent evaluator on February 20, 2020 to execute the services specified in the Evaluation Terms of References (see Annex 1).

PROJECT BRIEF DESCRIPTION

PCi and YCCD's *"Progressing youth participation in Armenia on governance and peace"* Project is a one-year initiative, started at the beginning of April 2019 with anticipated end date in March 31, 2020. The project is designed to assess, support and enhance the participation of young people in Armenia in matters of peace and security, in line with the UNSCR 2250. This idea was considered important by PCi in the context of active youth participation in the change of power and after the "Velvet Revolution" of 2018 in Armenia, that resulted in a new Government and Parliament in which young people are well represented, and there is more rationale for advocacy on youth policy and investigation of opportunities with the new administration to create space for conflict transformation.[1]

The Project ToC is built around the assumption that if Government officials, civil society organisations and youth leaders engage constructively on practical proposals for broadening the participation of youth in decision-making and peacebuilding and appropriate, high-quality materials on UNSCR 2250 and young persons trained in their delivery are available in Armenia, then aspects of the 2250 agenda will have higher prominence in official policy-making circles, which will then broaden the space for young people to participate in peacebuilding and widen the range of possibilities for addressing underlying drivers of conflict affecting Armenia.[2]

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[1] Source: Project Proposal p.3
[2] Source: Project ToC.

Therefore, the project worked to introduce new ideas into the approaches of Armenian civil society and the Government of Armenia towards engaging with young people by convening discussions between officials and civil society representatives and by designing and testing new materials that could build the skills of young people to work in the framework of UNSCR 2250. Over the course of its implementation, the PCi-YCCD project team has worked with civil society organisations, government officials, members of the Armenian Parliament, education professionals, as well as young people from different backgrounds, particularly engaging young women and men in the remote borderline communities of Tavush region of Armenia.[3] The project has a well-developed results framework with a total of two outcome-level and 5 output-level indicators (for more detail see p. 9 Table 2 of this report).

Under the scope of the project the following major activities were implemented by the team:

- Qualitative research (Activity 1.1) was completed on youth participation and youth expectations for transitions in the country in the wake of the protest movement that led to the change of government. The research focused on the expectations among young people (16-30 years of age) in decision-making in the new environment in Armenia and participation in peacebuilding initiatives aimed at ensuring peaceful transformation of regional conflicts. The qualitative research identified specific issues and patterns among young people on youth participation and peacebuilding.
- Four Roundtables (Activity 1.2) were completed with a range of stakeholders (NGOs, government officials, youth activists, etc.) to discuss findings from the research and to generate policy recommendations in line with the implementation of UNSCR 2250. Recommendations were planned to be included in a working paper based on discussions at the roundtables and the final report to be shared with the line ministries and state institutions, including the Ministry of ESCS, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the Parliament.
- A Study Visit to the UK (Activity 1.3) was organized for young policy makers (Track One level, including decision-makers from the Parliament and Government) and champions on youth issues among civil society organisations to learn from experience on engaging youth in decision making at different levels in Scotland.[4]
- Training materials, namely a Training Manual of four modules (Activity 2.1) was developed. An engaged interactive approach was used to design the methodology, when the participants are practicing their knowledge and making decisions with the support of a neutral and professional facilitator.[5]
- Training for Trainers (Activity 2.2) was organized to present the Manual to trainers. The aim of the activity was providing skills and knowledge to the participants, teaching them to use the Manual properly, to learn facilitation and to practice giving feed-back, as well as selecting six trainers best prepared to deliver the material for the testing of manuals during workshops with youth in regions of Armenia.
- Test of four training modules with young men at three communities in Tavush region (Activity 2.3). The selected trainers worked in pairs to conduct the trainings and to provide feed-back on how young people can be better engaged in matters of peace and security and how the material can be improved.

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[3] Source: Evaluation ToR p. 1
[4] Source: Project Proposal p. 1, Project Progress Reports, Project Activity Reports
[5] Source: Project Progress Reports.

Three staff members from PCi (2 people based in UK/Italy and 1 person based in Armenia) together with two staff members from YCCD were the core personnel of the project. Most of local activities in the regions were planned and organized by YCCD, including research preparation activities; community outreach; recruitment and advertising for participation in different activities; organisation of roundtables; etc. For the research component of the project interviewers and researchers were hired to conduct the fieldwork and analysis of the collected material, namely the focus groups, in-depth expert interviews and the desk review.

The project was designed to ensure quantitative gender balance in activities and take appropriate measures to ensure the quality of female participation. On OECD-DAC Gender Equality Marker (GEM) the project was scored one with gender equality being an important but secondary objective of the project.[6]

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Evaluation Framework and Criteria

The evaluation utilized a theory of change approach to evaluate the Project – its intended outputs and outcome, the results delivered to achieve those outputs and outcome, and the contextual factors that may have affected the implementation of activities and their potential to bring about desired outcome. Wherever the outcome-level data was lacking, the evaluation assessed the extent to which activities have contributed to the achievement of results in general for peacebuilding issues in Armenia and for CSSF Strategic Focus.

The evaluation considered all Project activities planned and implemented during the period April 01, 2019 to March 31, 2020 and analyzed the achievements against expected results, defined in the results' framework.
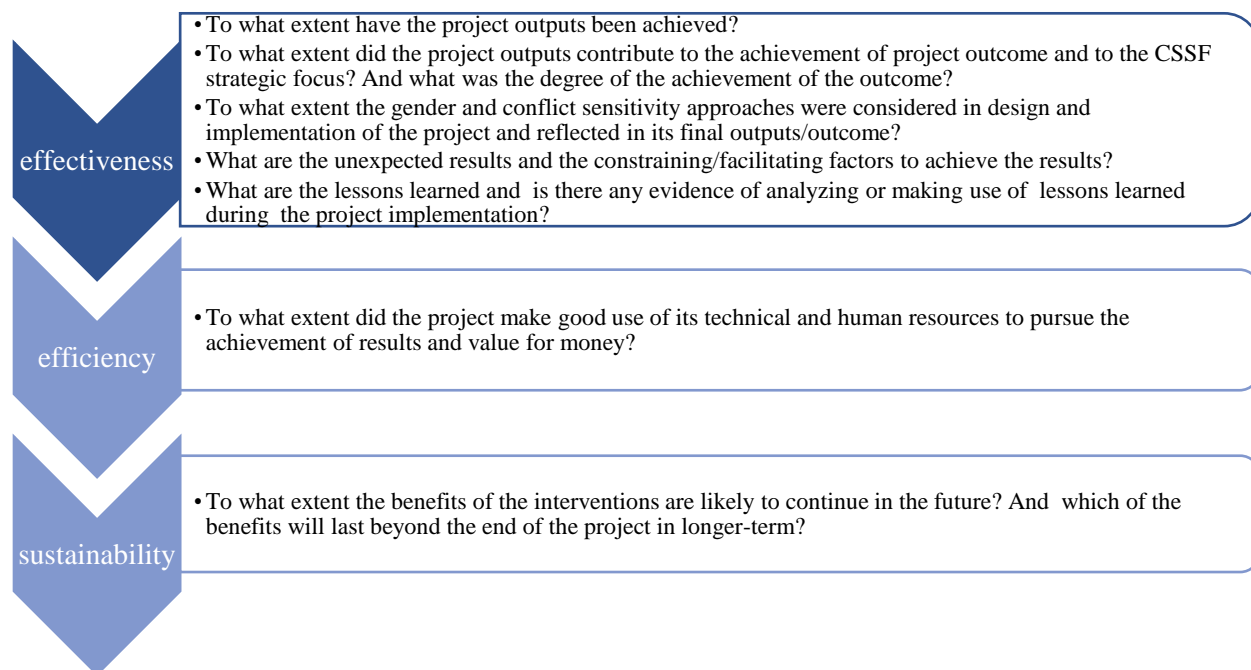
To delineate the thematic scope of the evaluation and to ensure the collection of relevant data, the standard DAC/OECD[7] evaluation criteria were used for this evaluation purposes. Of six standard evaluation criteria, three were selected for the needs of this evaluation, considering its scope, available resources and the timing. Namely, the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability (to extent possible) were applied to assess inputs on the performance and future benefits, as well as to reveal the facilitating and constraining factors.

Per each evaluation criterion at least one evaluation question was selected from the list of standard evaluation questions of DAC/OECD and adapted to reflect the requirements of the Evaluation ToR. Major emphasis was put on the measurement of effectiveness of project interventions. The final list of evaluation questions per criterion are presented in Figure 1 below.

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[6] Source: Project Proposal p. 1

[7] The six evaluation criteria of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD are relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, available at: https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm accessed on February 27, 2020

Figure 1. Evaluation Questions per Evaluation Criterion

effectiveness
- To what extent have the project outputs been achieved?
- To what extent did the project outputs contribute to the achievement of project outcome and to the CSSF strategic focus? And what was the degree of the achievement of the outcome?
- To what extent the gender and conflict sensitivity approaches were considered in design and implementation of the project and reflected in its final outputs/outcome?
- What are the unexpected results and the constraining/facilitating factors to achieve the results?
- What are the lessons learned and is there any evidence of analyzing or making use of lessons learned during the project implementation?

efficiency
- To what extent did the project make good use of its technical and human resources to pursue the achievement of results and value for money?

sustainability
- To what extent the benefits of the interventions are likely to continue in the future? And which of the benefits will last beyond the end of the project in longer-term?

Evaluation Methods and Evaluation Matrix

The evaluation criteria referenced above were used as a guide for the entire data collection and analysis process, including the selection of types and sources of data, data collection methods and the development of evaluation tools. To link the questions to the evaluation criteria – and to reference them to assumptions and indicators, as well as to provide data sources and data collection methods – an Evaluation Matrix was developed (see Annex 2). The Evaluation Matrix became the primary analytical tool for the current evaluation.

This evaluation used a retrospective non-experimental qualitative evaluation design, as it was impossible to use resource-intensive methods of quantitative data collection (such as surveys). However, multiple data sources and methods of data collection were used, including secondary analysis of quantitative data wherever applicable, in order to both triangulate data and optimize its reliability, as well as to add depth and richness in analysis.

The following data collection methods were used for the evaluation: desk-review of available documentation and reporting (see Annex 3 List of Documents Reviewed), qualitative interviews with key stakeholders, implementers and beneficiaries. Total of 10 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with donors, participants of the Study Visit and Roundtables, as well as 3 group discussions with direct beneficiaries, namely the participants of Training of Trainers and the trained youth were anticipated for the evaluation in Yerevan and Tavush region of the project in the time period from 29 February to 9 March, 2020. However, due to deteriorating situation with Coronavirus in the country, the FGs with youth in the regions were canceled. Annex 4 presents the mapping of major stakeholder/beneficiary groups with the list of KII interviewees.

Evaluation Limitations

The potential risks and limitations of the evaluation were identified during the Inception Phase, and some steps were taken to mitigate their negative effect. Overall, the Evaluation faced no major organizational problems, which is due to the excellent support of the implementers in providing access to all project related documents and information, contacts of participants and space for interviews, whenever needed.

Table 1. Evaluation Limitations and Mitigating Measures

Risk	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Possible challenges in evaluating the outcome level achievements, as the project is not over and some of finalizing activities are still pending	High	Evaluation tried to access documents and to retrieve information about planned steps, to analyze any evidence on further developments anticipated by the implementers, partners and participants of the project.
Intensive cost-benefit or cost-efficiency analysis and budget analysis, not anticipated by the ToR and the evaluation design.	Medium	Instead, the evaluation analyzed the value for money to pursue the achievement of results in a broader sense of making good use of financial, technical and human resources. Project audit could be considered by PCi under the scope of its annual or rolling external audits.
Coronavirus outbreak in Armenia.	Low	Due to coronavirus outbreak, all academic and education institutions were closed in the weeks of March 2-8 and March 13-23, when the FGs with youth were planned. The FGs were postponed and later canceled. Remote interviews via Skype were suggested and conducted for all the interviewees as an option, if they avoided any direct communication for preventive reasons.

KEY FINDINGS

Effectiveness

The desk review shows that the project ToC with M&E frameworks is delineating clear milestones and targets for the achievement of results. The project conceptual and logical framework is very well designed. Moving forward, the project intended outputs were properly monitored and the project was mostly on-track to realize its expected targets and activities (see Table 2). According to the Project Progress Reports, **it has largely been implemented in line with the initial plan; and the intended targets have been mostly achieved for both outputs**, as can be seen from Table 2. Regarding Output One Indicator 1.1, it is impressive that the number of men and women attending roundtables to promote 2250 exceeds the planned target of 65 people by around 31%, reaching out additionally to 20 young men and women. All the results contributing to the achievement of the project Output Two were attained, with targets exceeded under the indicator for positive response to developed materials from training participants: more than 90% reacted positively compared to the initial target of at least 70%.

Less effectiveness is reported for Output Indicator 1.2 that showcases less engagement with state representatives attending Roundtables. The project did not manage to bring the advocacy on 2250 into the focus of 12 state officials, as planned, getting involved with only 6 of them. According to Activity Reports, the contacted officials were extremely busy and it was hard to ensure their participation in the events even though they were confirming their availability in advance. It was really challenging for the team to anticipate officials' level of engagement, therefore the project team invested additional efforts to ensure at least minimum level of supposed collaboration.[8] It should, however, be noted that all Government officials responsible for youth work in Armenia within the Ministry of ESCS participated in the Roundtables and shared their vision about youth participation in decision making. Among them were the Adviser to the Minister, Heads of Youth Policy Department (2 different people at different times). Also, the Deputy Minister covering youth work was separately briefed about Resolution 2250. From Parliament, 2 Members of Parliament (MPs) from different Committees (Foreign Relations and Education, Science, Culture, Diaspora, Youth and Sport) attended the Roundtables.

However, in terms of intensity of engagement at the policy and outcome level, it should be stated that Output One strongly contributed to Outcome-level achievements. Hence, of 6 RT participants all 6 verbally or in correspondence confirmed their readiness to advocate for the promotion of UNSCR 2250, giving considered response to recommendations generated by the project in the third quarter (see Outcome Indicator 2, Table 2). Most importantly:
- the Advisor to the Minister of ESCS, initiated a meeting of Study Visit participants and the active CSOs from the RTs with the Minister,
- a working group was established to start participatory development of the Youth Strategy and Action Plan with two RT participants actively supporting the working group,[9]
- As a result of CSO-Government collaboration, the Minister expressed readiness to actively engage youth NGOs to work on Youth Policy in Armenia.[10]

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[8] Source: Activity Report on Round Tables 1-4.
[9] Source: KIIs, Meeting Minutes, media publications.
[10] Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1ly_iyP9MI 1:07:20 – 1:07:46

Outcome Indicators One and Two were still in progress at the moment of evaluation with a number of inputs and activities on-track, which should contribute to the successful implementation of project results at the CSSF Strategic Focus level. More specifically, the recommendations on promotion of UNSCR 2250 in Armenia have been generated based on three RT discussions and presented for validation during the fourth RT.[11] The RT became a platform for state representatives, CSOs and youth initiatives to develop an impressive set of collaborative recommendations for strengthening the involvement of youth in decision making and peace leadership. Of 8 CSOs participating in the last RT, 6 have already provided a verbal confirmation to endorse all five recommendations into their active steps to advocate for bringing youth into matters of peace and security. However, formal endorsement of their advocacy plans is still pending.[12]

Table 2. Outcome/Output Indicators and Targets Met, Quarterly Progress from 04/2019 to 03/2020

PROJECT OUTCOME. Armenian government and civil society endorse new approaches to bringing youth into matters of peace and security, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2250.					
Indicators		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4*
1. Recommendations generated by project on promoting UNSCR2250 are endorsed by at least five Armenian organisations, who take active steps to advocate for these recommendations.	Baseline	0	0	0	0
	Target/Milestone	-	-	2 rec. by 5+ CSOs	5 rec. by 5+ CSOs
	Reported	-	-	0	in progress
2. State officials give considered response to recommendations generated by the project on promotion of UNSCR2250.	Baseline	0	0	0	0
	Target/Milestone	-	-	2	4
	Reported	-	-	0	in progress
PROJECT OUTPUT 1. Civil society participate in developing approaches to advocacy on 2250.					
Indicators		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4*
1.1. Number of men and women attending roundtables to promote 2250.	Baseline	0	0	30	85
	Target/Milestone	20	50	65	65
	Reported	0	30	55	85
1.2. Number of state representatives (men and women) attending roundtable discussions	Baseline	0	0	0	5
	Target/Milestone	3	9	12	12
	Reported	0	0	5	6
1.3. Number of study visit male and female participants that pass on learning into own civil society or government work.	Baseline	0	0	0	7
	Target/Milestone	-	-	7	7
	Reported	-	-	7	7
PROJECT OUTPUT 2. Materials for engaging youth on matters of peace and security are adapted to Armenian context and tested in educational setting.					
Indicators		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4*
2.1. Percentage of training participants (young men and women) who respond positively overall to material developed	Baseline	0	0	0	90%+
	Target/Milestone	-	-	70%	70%+
	Reported	-	-	90%+	90%+
2.2. Number of Armenia-specific case studies (including gender-specific) developed to illustrate material	Baseline	0	0	0	2
	Target/Milestone	-	-	2	2
	Reported	-	-	2	2

the quarterly report 4 is pending and the data for Q4 is reflecting the results as of 2nd week of March 2020.
Source: Quarterly Project Progress Reports

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[11] Source: KIIs, Activity Report Round Table 4, PPT presentation with Recommendations.
[12] Source: KIIs, Progress Reports.

The Study Visit and RTs were found mostly effective by the participants, no suggestion for improvement of the Study Visit content were mentioned by interviewed participants.[13] As to the RTs, major emphasis was made to discuss and formulate the recommendations, while the interviewed RT participants noted that they lacked a discussion of further actions or mechanisms for implementation of the recommendations. The evaluation finds that discussion on action plans and mechanisms could have increased overall effectiveness of RTs, contributing to outcome level results.

More detailed examination of feedback collected from a 6-day ToT for 15 participants from different regions of Armenia and testing of materials during the trainings with youth, reveals that the material was found extremely useful for formal and non-formal education targeting the adolescents and youth, teachers, adult students (11-12 grades), students, NGOs, and to a lesser extent for people living in the border regions of Armenia.[14] The most effective part of the trainings, according to desk-review of evaluation forms, the activity reports and the group discussion with ToT trainers, were the Modules on "Principles of dialogue" and "Understanding of Peace and Peacebuilding" (usefulness scores 98% and 97%, respectively).[15]

Yet, the major module on Principles of UNSCR 2250 was considered too complicated, not enough time was scheduled for the discussion and the materials provided during the ToT (in Russian) were not very useful to participants (usefulness score 48%).[16] Overall, running of ToT in Russian did not contribute to the effectiveness of the discussions: according to interview results, for most of the participants Russian was difficult to communicate in, and there were situations when participants avoided getting into discussion because of the language barrier. The ToT implementer and the developer of training materials finds it important to communicate directly with the ToT participants which is explained by a proven international expertise.[17] The evaluation finds that she demonstrated high-quality and professional work, adopted interactive new methods of communication with the team and was very responsive to questions and the feedback. However, lack of translation affected results of the process in a negative way. This was improved after a good-quality translation of all training materials into Armenian and publication of the handbook/manual, which is found users-friendly and innovative by beneficiaries and by the evaluator.[18] Most importantly, the UNSCR 2250 is translated into Armenian and presented as an Annex 12 to the Manual[19], which is the first translation of this document into native language and contributes effectively to the major goal of the project. A Facebook group was established by ToT participants and the trainer to share feed-back and communicate, however, it was not effectively used in the longer run to receive answers to their questions during the test of the materials. The interviews with ToT participants, showed that they preferred contacting directly PCi staff, rather than sharing their concerns in a group. Evaluation finds that the potential of social media communication tools was not fully realized by the project to enhance networking of ToT participants and the trainer.

The evaluation confirms that there were significant constraints, as well as facilitating factors that both impeded and aided the achievement of results at both outcome and output levels. Some of the factors are presented below.

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[13] Source: KIIs, feed-back forms.
[14] Source: KIIs, Group Discussion, Progress Reports.
[15] Source: Group Discussion, Activity Report ToT, p. 3
[16] Ibid.
[17] Source: KII.
[18] Source: KII, Group Discussion, Observation of Project Closure Event.
[19] Manual in Armenian: Youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding, UK Gov, PCI, YCCD, 2020

Structural Changes in RA Government: In May 2019, the structural optimization of the Armenian Government was completed. The aim behind the merging of the Ministries was to improve the management of state agencies, and put an end to the overlapping accountabilities of different government agencies, often leading to a lack of coordination and contradicting policies, as well as overall inefficiency. The Ministry of Sport and Youth, which had been responsible for working on youth policies, was merged into the newly formed Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport. On the one hand, the changes in Government provided the Project team with new prospects for progressing the peacebuilding and youth participation agenda through functional partnerships with the new officials at the Ministry and at the newly established Department for the Youth Affairs. On the other hand, a lack of institutional memory and delay with prioritization of the new government on youth issues made it difficult for the project team to promote the agenda of youth participation in peace and security straightforward. Moreover, the Deputy Minister, coordinating youth affairs, was accused in corruption and misconduct, which made it unclear who should be defined as a target official for project engagement. The team demonstrated excellent flexibility and did not miss the window of opportunity to successfully partner with the newly appointed Advisor to the Minister. This partnership proved to contribute greatly to overall effectiveness of the project, especially at the outcome level.

EU support to youth policy development: EU on behalf of the Council of Europe re-launched its support to youth empowerment and policy development in Armenia, organizing an advisory mission to Armenia in July 2019. The mission aimed at advising the Armenian authorities on how to further develop and implement the national youth strategy. The PCi/YCCD team effectively used some recommendations from the EU report, to build synergies with RT results and reflected the findings in one of their recommendations for a transparent and inclusive approach of youth engagement in the development and delivery of the national strategy. This presents a good example of benefiting from joint efforts of stakeholders towards youth participation to enhance the Project results.

Gaining collaboration with MoFA: Since UNSCR 2250 is not an imperative resolution, the Armenian MoFA was not proactively engaged in any programs or discussions around 2250. Nevertheless, gaining collaboration with MoFA under the scope of the project was a good start for the sensitization of state officials on the issue and searching for grounds for high-level engagement. The project staff officially contacted the MoFA and the Head of the Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues Department was delegated to engage in the project and Study Visit. Other experts from the International Organisations department engaged in the Research phase of the project.

Changes in Youth Policy Approach of the Government: The apparent loss of prominence of youth policy for the new government caused some concerns among activists on youth policy, and this has been a contributing factor for the creation of the Youth Organisations Union ("YOU") platform, which aimed to ensure that the need for a holistic youth policy could be incorporated into the government agenda. PCi and YCCD reacted swiftly enough to engage with "YOU" Platform and closely followed their work, thus effectively building synergies for achievement of project outcome and outputs.

Lack of engagement with UN Armenia: The project team identified the need to get engaged with the UN, given the major project focus on UNSCR 2250. Head of the MoFA's OSCE and Conventional Arms Control Division was updated about the project and its activities. Contacts were established with the UN Peace and Development Advisor at the UNDP Armenia, however there was no direct involvement from the relevant body, which could have expanded potential to benefit from joint efforts of UN agencies in the country. Evaluation finds this as a missed opportunity for the project team.

Overload of internal political agenda in context of constitutional court reform: Members of Parliament have also been contacted and informed about the project and its Study Visit component. The idea was to build partnerships with Parliament deputies directly engaged in youth, peace and security issues and in an overall strategy for building advocacy relationships. Though the Parliament deputies and officials working on youth issues constitute important allies for civil society to promote the interests of young people at the official level,

a major constraining factor for broader engagement was the overload of the political agenda with internal tension around the constitutional court in Armenia and a lack of interest towards youth issues. Moreover, peacebuilding is still considered a sensitive topic for open political discourse in Armenia, meeting aggressive criticism from the former political regime and radical nationalists. From this perspective, it is important to search for alliances or to support dialogue among peace opposition groups.

The evaluation finds that the project took appropriate measures to ensure the quality of female participation, and that the gender and conflict sensitivity approaches were considered in design and implementation of the project and reflected in its final outputs to a significant extent. The research component included separate female focus groups to ensure substantive engagement on the issues. Analysis of research results took into account gender implications.[20] Discussions to generate and promote recommendations during the RTs included organisations with a specific mission to promote gender equality, such as Women Development Centre (Goris), Oxygen, other women and human rights NGOs.[21] Training modules developed by the project were tested for their relevance on gender sensitivity.[22] Some gender related topics were covered during the ToT and the test trainings for youth. The trainers worked in gender balanced pairs to ensure smooth interactions with group members. However, the trainers considered the gender aspects too sensitive for discussions in remote regions and mentioned some challenges in terms of management of intragroup relationships between participants in mixed groups, which they were not capacitated to solve.[23] For instance, boys sat aside from girls and did not interact with each other. They felt uncomfortable and confused when asked to work in mixed teams or in pairs, and it was hard for the trainers to react to that. Boys were less active, and it was very hard to gain their attention. When discussion about gender equality issues was initiated by one of the trainers, the participants got into a tense discussion, which ended by an open confrontation with the trainer.

Given the fact that more women are representing youth organizations and more women are actively interested in promotion of youth issues in Armenia, **the project ended up with some quantitative gender imbalance in favor of female engagement in all of the activities**. Hence, of 88 RT participants[24] only 31 or 35,2% were males; the Study Visit group composed of 4 men representing the project team and 6 women nominated for the Study Visit; among 18 ToT participants 8 or 44% were males and majority of youth trained in Tavush were young women.[25] However, discussions with project direct and indirect beneficiaries pointed out the need for more targeted outreach for male participants, which could bring peacebuilding and youth issues into the focus of male policy-makers' attention, as well as introduce knowledge on conflict transformation to young men, who are usually more prone to violent forms of conflict behavior than women.

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[20] Research Report Youth Participation in Decision-Making and Peacebuilding in Armenia, PCi/YCCD, Yerevan 2019
[21] Source: RT Activity Reports, RT Participation Lists.
[22] Source: KIIs, FGs, desk-review.
[23] Source: FG.
[24] This figure includes 3 project personnel.
[25] Source: RT, ToT, SV Activity report, Participation and Attendance Lists.

Efficiency

The indicative budget for the Project was £120,000, with major activity costs distributed more or less evenly across project time-line and project outputs (see Charts 1-3 and Table 3), Output One representing around 57% of the activity funds and Output Two 43%, accordingly (see Chart 2). In terms of funding, the RTs and the Research were the two largest in project portfolio, comprising 25% and 23% of total activity costs. The smallest project activity was the Study Visit (around 8% of total activity costs). However, in terms of the value for money, better results were reported against targets on output-level for the second less-costly output.

In practice, the budget allocation over the period from Q1 to Q 3 totaled £102174.00 and actual expenditure was £94094.00 (see Table 3), hence comprising 92% fund utilization. Table 3 summarises the total quarterly budget and expenditure in absolute numbers and its utilization shares; the quarterly budgets and expenditure are depicted in Chart 1.

Overall, this figure shows that **the project is on track to fully utilize its funds**, albeit, the second quarter reported less than 80% fund utilization. Project Progress Reports and the KIIs ascertained that **the project team respectively reduced travel and per diem costs and costs related to administrative expenses, as well as had selected activities, biddings/quotations/price offers meeting best combination of quality and price based on the principle of value for money**. In combination with some requests from the donor to decrease the scope of planned activities, i.e. to reduce number of Study Visit participants from 12 to 7, it resulted in a considerable underspend.[26] Some savings appeared, which were used for extra activities planned in the last quarter, namely a project closing event and a film production.[27]

Interviews with the implementers and participants, as well as document analysis, indicate that **the project has used its resources to achieve outputs at the anticipated level and that the resources, contractual and management operations were mostly disbursed in time with minor shifts in the schedules.** Nevertheless, KII's showed that the donor's perception of extra funds available is not quite positive. On the contrary, it is considered by the representative of the Embassy to be a consequence of poor planning, inability to detect the procurement risks and to re-allocate the extra funds in a timely manner for improvement of overall progress towards the project results. Moreover, **the donor representative mentioned some misunderstanding by the implementers of the procurement requirements and lack of flexibility in responding to donor's requests regarding budget planning and reporting** to the CSSF.[28]

Along the same lines, the evaluation revealed that there were procurement actions, identified by the donors containing risks for conflict of interest in line with British Embassy rules and regulations, but were acceptable under the Policy and Guidance protocols of PCi and YCCD. For instance, the lowest quotation for provision of incentives for FG participants was received from a company interrelated with the YCCD project manager, but following the PCi policy and guidance the bid was considered for selection as a best value for money option.[29] This mismatch led to a certain tension in relationships with the donor and required swift reaction from the project team to settle the issue. In spite of the fact that the project team tried to communicate the justification to the donor and was open to change the sub-contractor, there was no follow-up action taken by the donor for final solution of the issues.

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[26] Source: KIIs, e-mail correspondence with the donor.
[27] Source: Project Progress Reports 1, 2, 3
[28] Source: KII.
[29] Source: KIIs, Project Correspondence.

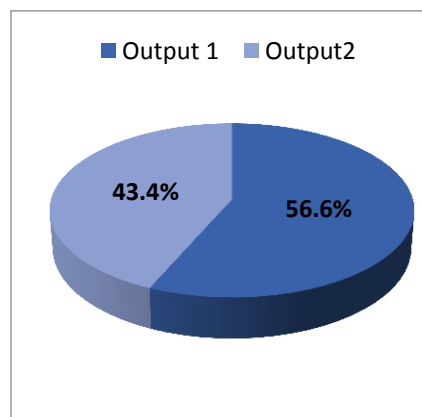**Chart 1 Activity Costs Per Output in % (excluding admin costs)**

Legend: ■ Output 1 ■ Output2

43.4%   56.6%

Chart 2 Costs Per Activity in % (excluding admin costs)

- activity 2.3. Youth trainings, 13.72%
- activity 2.2. ToT, 15.06%
- activity 1.1. Research, 23.65%
- activity 2.1.Manual, 14.63%
- activity 1.2. Round Tables, 25.19%
- activity 1.3. Study Visit, 7.76%
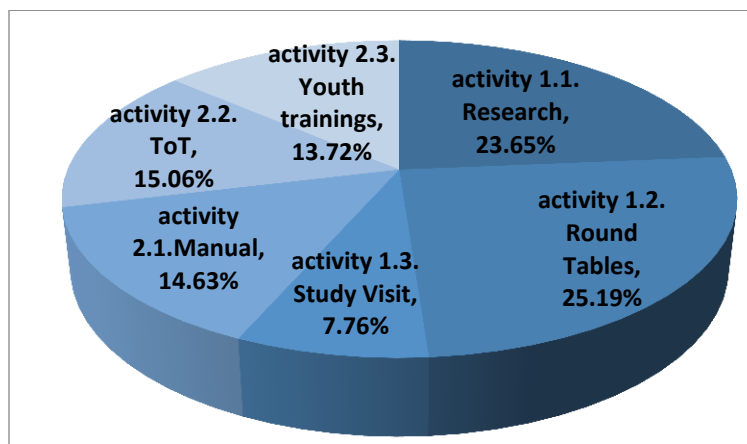
Chart 3 Quarterly Anticipated Budget and Actual Expenditure

Legend: ■ Anticipated Budget ■ Actual Expenditure

Q1: 30848 / 25572
Q2: 31188 / 24886
Q3: 40138 / 43636
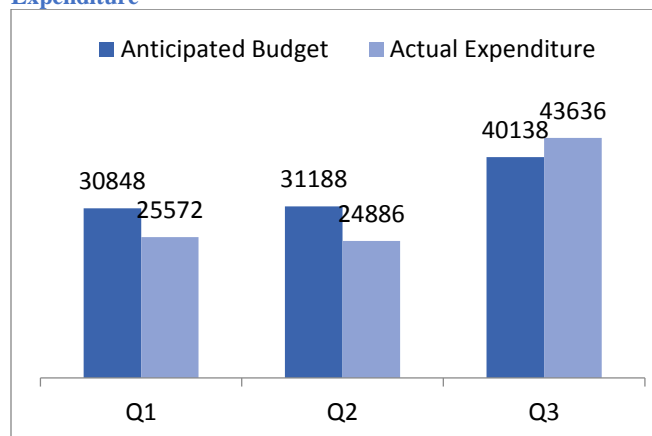
Table 3 Budget Expenditures

	Anticipated Budget	Actual Expenditure	% spent of quarterly	% spent of total budget
Q1	30848	25572	82.90	21.3
Q2	31188	24886	79.79	20.7
Q3	40138	43636	108.71	36.4
Q4	17826	NA	NA	14.9*

*Q4 figures are not available, this figure is calculated based on budget left for Q4.

Key staff of the Project was represented by three part-time experts from PCi, responsible for overall coordination of the project, and one full-time and one part-time national officers from YCCD, responsible for the work in the regions of Armenia, as well as administrative and organisational aspects of the project. **To achieve its project results, PCi/YCCD small team have made good use of their human, financial and technical resources through the establishment of a functional partnership, with clear distribution of tasks and accountabilities.**

There is enough evidence that monitoring and documenting of the results has taken place, with clearly formulated lessons learnt and paths forward. The quarterly progress reports, the activity reports, the meeting notes clearly identify challenges and best practices, outlining the potential risks. Respective evaluation and assessment tools for the collection of participants' feedback have been developed and used by the team. Scanned and electronic versions of participation and attendance lists, Roundtable notes, meeting minutes, correspondence and other relevant materials were produced, stored and archived properly. **Evaluation finds that project performance was exceptionally well-monitored and documented. Given the scope of the M&E tools and collected data, it is obvious that the staff capacity has been adequate to ensure smooth implementation and monitoring of inputs and activities: the small team managed to complete an astonishing load of administrative work.**

None of the key informants interviewed, expressed dissatisfaction or recalled challenges in the financial and technical management of the major activities. However, based on KII results, **it is revealed that the increased number of full-time staff could have contributed to a more balanced distribution of multiple administrative tasks within the team.** For instance, the PCi was not much engaged with the procurement and administrative aspects of the project at the local level, where most of responsibilities were carried out by YCCD. YCCD, through its two staff and efficient personal networking in the region, managed to organize and facilitate a huge scope of local level work, such as managing of three simultaneous events in three separate locations of Tavush region every weekend for a month with engagement of more than 56 participants (41 women and 15 men from communities of Ijevan, Berd and Noyemberyan), organizing a ToT session in peak holiday season managing to book the facility at relatively low price. At the same time, **the evaluation found some technical bottlenecks and minor inconveniences for the participants reported at the local level**, namely related to the ToT and regional training venue, food/beverage provisions, etc., which overall did not impact the effectiveness of the activities, such as:

- lack of air-conditioning at the hotel, where the ToT was organized[30]
- impossibility to organize hot lunch at local trainings in some of the regional trainings (hot lunch was not planned for the regional workshops, only coffee breaks, but starting from the second workshops snacks and hot lunch also were delivered to the participants, however the trainers were not satisfied with the quality and would prefer receiving per-diem to take care of their own food)
- unforeseen shifts in the venues of regional trainings, for instance in the community of Noyemberyan
- lack of quality services provided by local sub-contractors in the regions during the trainings[31]
- overrunning the time of third RT due to delay on serving of the refreshments
- planning of the weekly training sessions, which created long breaks between the sessions[32]

To some extent, this might be determined by lack of general capacity of service-providers at the local level, yet, more engagement from PCi side could have solved some of the issues faced by YCCD on the ground. On the contrary, **evaluation finds that the Study Visit management, including agenda design, accommodation, etc. is highly appreciated by all stakeholders and demonstrates best practices in the frames of current project administration**. The key informants expressed their gratitude for highly professional work and individual approach of the coordinators. Moreover, key informants from the state sector noted that they learned not only from the content of the visit, but also benefited from management, protocol and planning perspective.[33]

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[30] Although only 1 of 15 participants provided negative feed-back in the written assessment forms filled in after the ToT on this issue, during the evaluation group interview with the trainers they mentioned that lack of air conditioning created inconveniences to their work, but as overall they had enjoyed the training greatly, they had not written complaints in the written assessment forms.

[31] Namely, based on group discussion and activity reports, they did not allow to change the places of the chairs in the room, did not clean the space well, did not provide necessary number of chairs in advance, etc.

[32] Source: KIIs, Assessment Forms, Activity Reports.

[33] Source: KIIs, Response Letters from Study Visit participants.

Sustainability

In terms of sustainability, **the evaluation finds that most of the project results are likely to last beyond the end of the current project and will continue contributing to the CSSF strategic focus.** Particularly, **there is evidence that the training materials produced are well-disseminated and will be used by trainers and experts in Armenia and in Nagorno-Karabakh even without further funding from the project.** The KIIs with representatives of CSOs and with ToT participants ascertained that there is a willingness to use the manuals for the initiatives in the future. The Evaluation found that relationships with ToT members and the project team tend to be strong, and that ToT members are trying to raise their own funds and develop their own action plans independent of the project and sustainable in the longer run.[34]

Two of the trainers already had conducted trainings based on the Manual for youth in the communities of Nagorno-Karabakh through their own initiative. The trainings were supported by local Ministry of Education and some funding was provided to the trainers from the Nagorno-Karabakh official budget. The representatives of three other NGOs interviewed by the evaluator, namely the Future Bridge NGO, the Research Center for Societies in Transition, and Youth Initiative Center of Gyumri, expressed willingness to use the Manuals for the training of the youth. Formally those outlines were not yet included into NGO Annual Plans, as the latter are usually approved in advance, but there is a clear readiness to add the materials under some of their future projects. The training manuals were introduced to young activists by one of the trainers during the launch of his NGO (Future Bridge); to promote the educational material among other interested stakeholders, PCi organised a small presentation during the closure event of the project. The hardcopies of the Manual were available for all event participants. The manual is open for public use in electronic version and the information to promote it is being disseminated through different networks, including partner networks such as the YOU platform.[35] PCi and YCCD introduced the project to the YOU platform members consisting of 15 youth organisations. To support sustainability of the project they started sharing information on events and other relevant activities to build synergies and promote youth issues in Armenia.[36]

The project consistently involved an extensive range of different partners and stakeholders from Government, civil society and parliament, thus it successfully promoted national ownership for youth policy development, enhancing the potential for project sustainability. KIIs with state officials revealed readiness to adopt and use the knowledge and learning shared during the Study Visit, as well as the recommendations generated during the RTs. The representative of the MoESCS assured that the Study Visit directly influenced her decision to activate the youth strategy development processes in the Ministry and was reflected in the Minister's order regarding her support in coordination of the works of MoESCS Youth division. She did not receive the final paper with RT recommendations at the moment of the evaluation, but she ascertained that the recommendations would become a basis for the discussion of Youth Strategy and Action plan under the umbrella of a multi-stakeholder working group, planned for March-April 2020. One of the Study Visit parliamentarian participants expressed her plans to launch an initiative towards legislative changes and drafting of Youth Law. Formally she did not make any steps yet, which was explained by the intensive political processes linked to the referendum on the constitutional court in Armenia to be held in early April 2020. However, she already had some notes and was going to prepare drafts for internal discussion within her political fraction and within the National Assembly Standing Committee on Science, Education, Culture, Diaspora, Youth and Sports.

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[34] Source: KII, Progress Reports.
[35] Source: KIIs, desk-review.
[36] Source: KIIs, Progress Reports.

There is no evidence that the materials or the recommendations generated by the project will contribute directly to specific peacebuilding projects supporting Nagorno-Karabakh conflict transformation, Armenia-Turkey normalisation process or any other aspects of foreign affairs. The MoFA did not mention any changes in their approaches towards the UNSCR 2250 or application of shared information to benefit their work. However, the UNSCR 2250 had continuously been under the scope of awareness raising and promotion initiatives of the ministry. There is more willingness expressed in all of the KIIs to embark on youth participation issues for internal decision-making, rather than for international relations.

And finally, **the evaluation finds a lack of awareness on the research results among the partners and beneficiaries of the project, determined by non-targeted and small-scale dissemination efforts under the research component.** The research results were presented to the wider public and are available on-line for public use; however, most of the interviewed officials were not aware of the research report. All of them expressed interest towards the report and willingness to use the findings, but they were not informed about the availability of the study.

CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusions from the evaluation are presented as follows:

- The Project has largely achieved its intended results and objectives at the output level. All output indicator targets, except the target for number of state officials participating in the RTs, have been consistently met or exceeded throughout all project activities. However, their contribution to the achievement of the planned outcome and the accomplishment of broader strategic focus of CSSF is still in progress.

- The project advocacy and capacity building efforts resulted in the development of appropriate materials and youth policy recommendations to enhance participation of youth in decision making in Armenia and to promote understanding of UNSCR 2250.

- The team demonstrated excellent flexibility and did not miss the windows of opportunity to successfully partner with the newly appointed Advisor to the Minister of ESCS and the "YOU" Platform. These partnerships proved to contribute greatly to overall effectiveness of the project, especially at the outcome level.

- The quality of female participation and the gender and conflict sensitivity approaches were considered in design and implementation of the project and were reflected in its final outputs to a significant extent. However, the project quantitative gender balance was skewed in favor of female engagement in all of the activities, which negatively affected the potential of reaching out to men with aggressive or militaristic conflict attitudes.

- It is impressive that the Project has been able to achieve significant results, monitor and document properly the progress and lessons learned, demonstrated best practice and innovation with relatively few full-time staff. Increased number of full-time staff could have contributed to a more balanced distribution of multiple administrative tasks within the team and reducing the burden of local level planning. Consequently, some technical bottlenecks and minor inconveniences for the participants showed up at the local/regional level of project implementation.

- The project mostly succeeded in disbursing nearly 92% of its budget by end of the third quarter through the good use of bidding and selection exercises to ensure value for money principle. Yet, there were procurement and planning issues, identified by the donor that hindered to some extent the smooth implementation of the project and required more flexibility from the team to improve the challenging situations.

- The Project team has developed materials and enhanced national youth capacity that can be sustained in the long-term. The modules developed for the youth workshops will be used beyond the project lifespan across Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh by CSOs and the youth activists to enhance their knowledge of conflicts. At the same time, there is a lack of readiness to use them for specific peacebuilding projects particularly supporting Nagorno-Karabakh conflict transformation, Armenia-Turkey normalisation process or any other aspects of foreign affairs. The materials produced, including the research and the manual, are available to be used and are in use as reference materials for civil society and youth organisations, but the potential for sustainable use of the research report was not realized by the project to full extent.

- The project selected well-placed partners in the state and CSO levels who contribute to the long-term sustainability of project results and further policy-making in the country.

LESSONS LEARNED

Capturing the failures and successes faced by the project, the following lessons learned are explored by the evaluation:

- *Planning of Events*: the planning of events should consider seasonal and other contexts. For instance, some project activities organized in summertime overlapped with vacations and affected attendance and enrollment of officials and other decision makers. The duration of RTs should be adjusted to the needs of the most important stakeholders and should dedicate adequate timing for each participant to present their ideas. The agenda of the Study Visit was very full, and sometimes it was difficult to find time for reflection until the final day. More time to pause and prepare prior to every meeting could be useful both for the Study Visit and the ToT. The test training sessions were conducted only on week-ends, which created long breaks between the sessions and proved to be problematic for both the participants and the trainers.
- *Partnership and Selection of participants*: more efforts and time should be planned in advance to reach out to politicians and state officials. Partnerships with donor community, namely with the UN, the EU, etc., should be extensively explored to benefit from joint efforts. Formalization of partnerships, such as signing of memorandums of understanding could build a stronger ground for sustainability of cooperation. Targeted outreach to young men, especially those from more skeptically oriented groups, should become an important benchmark for peacebuilding projects.
- *Procurement and Donor Requests:* possible mismatch between donor's rules and regulation and the implementer's guidelines should be considered in advance, with open discussion initiated with the donor. In case of subcontracting or procurement organized by local organizations, it is important to strengthen their procurement capacity and awareness on fraud and conflict-of-interest issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation findings and conclusions point towards a number of complementary recommendations for strategic and activity levels, presented below.

Strategic Level Recommendations

1. Map interventions of different donors, working in the field in order to benefit from joint efforts prior to project launch;
2. Entail more efforts on mainstreaming peacebuilding agenda through engagement with skeptical policy-makers and young males, which should be preceded by a research which would determine how they could be reached and what is the best path for doing so; as well as diversify project activities across all parties to conflicts (e.g. Armenia-Nagorno-Karabakh-Azerbaijan) to trigger the changes at regional level.
3. In the planning phase of the projects, the PCi/YCCD to look at ways in which their project may achieve its goals using the requisite staff, namely putting in place administrative/financial personnel, who is adequate to accomplish the procurement and subcontracting, thus releasing to some extent the pressure on team members.
4. In case of partnership with local NGOs in developing countries, the PCi to put more efforts in building/improving the skills and capacities of the implementing partner, namely sharing knowledge on results-based management, fraud and integrity awareness, conflict-of-interest matters.
5. Plan more time and broader focus for intensive engagement with state officials, in order to enhance policy-level results.

Activity Level Recommendations

Research: to put more efforts for wider dissemination of research reports, mainstreaming the research findings across the activities, presenting the reports to all beneficiary and partner organizations and persons involved.

Study Visit: clearly formulated criteria for nomination/selection of potential candidates should be shared not only with the donor for approval, but also with the stakeholders prior to the visits. To plan end-of-day follow-ups, which would ensure feed-back and commitment of participants to use the shared knowledge in future.

Roundtables: to facilitate discussions on mechanisms for action and steps forward to endorse the new approaches and recommendations, generated by projects. Think about ways to formalize the commitments of parties and to institutionalize the partnerships.

Training materials and ToT: in addition to final manuals prepared in local language, it is important to ensure proper translation of at least written draft materials into native language of participants for ToT sessions in advance and establish and coordinate in a longer run a communication platform for the participants and people using the Manual, where they can find answers to their questions and share ideas.

Annex 1. Evaluation Terms of Reference

Funded by UK Government   **Peaceful Change initiative**   **YCCD** *YOUTH COOPERATION CENTER OF DILIJAN*

Evaluation
Terms of References
Progressing youth participation in Armenia on governance and peace,
28 January 2020

Peaceful Change initiative (PCi) and Youth Cooperation Center of Dilijan (YCCD) are looking for an evaluator to undertake an evaluation of the project entitled "Progressing youth participation in Armenia on governance and peace".

1. Background

"Progressing youth participation in Armenia on governance and peace" is a one-year project (1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020) implemented by Peaceful Change initiative (PCi) and Youth Cooperation Centre of Dilijan (YCCD) with the financial support of the **UK Government's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund** and designed to assess, support and enhance the participation of young people in Armenia in matters of peace and security, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (UNSCR 225). The project works to introduce new ideas into the work of Armenian civil society and the Government of Armenia for working with young people by convening discussions between officials and civil society representatives and by designing and testing new materials that can build the skills of young people to work in the framework of UNSCR 2250. Over the course of its implementation, the PCi-YCCD project team has worked with civil society organisations, government officials and advisers, members of the Armenian Parliament, education professionals, as well as young people from different backgrounds but especially from communities in Tavush Marz.

PCi is now looking for an experienced evaluator who would be able to assess the impact of the work in line with its formal results framework, as well as assessing any additional results from the project and to provide recommendations to the PCi-YCCD project team and the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Armenia on how work on youth, peace and security could be programmed and implemented in the future.

2. Objectives and Methodology of the Evaluation

The successful applicant will be required to commit to **14 days** to working on the assignment, which will include:

- Assessment of the achievement level of project's impact, outcomes and outputs as indicated in the project log-frame and the Theory of Change

- Examine how successful the Project is at achieving the targets noted against each of the key output/outcome indicators;
- Assessment of the extent to which gender and conflict sensitivity approach were considered.
- Assessment of the overall effectiveness of the project and its contribution to the peacebuilding issues in Armenia.
- Briefings with PCi-YCCD implementing team and responsible UK Embassy staff.
- Background reading of project documentation, materials developed through the project, and monitoring and evaluation material.
- Design of a methodology to test agreed-upon research questions for use in the field.
- Travel to take interviews with informants from four communities in Tavush Marz (Dilijan, Ijevan, Berd, and Noyemberyan), as well as additional face-to-face interviews with officials in Yerevan. Supplementary interviews with civil society representatives in different parts of the country can be conducted remotely.
- Identification of lessons learned and good practices for consideration of the implementer and the donor.

PCi and YCCD will provide all the relevant project documents, contact information of project beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders.

3. Intended Use of the Evaluation

The primary beneficiary of the evaluation will be PCi. The main objective of this evaluation is to assess the overall achievement of the project and quality of implementation as well as the overall impact of the project. The evaluation will provide recommendations and guidance to PCi and the British Embassy Yerevan on future programming peacebuilding and youth work in Armenia. Evaluation results will be used by PCi and YCCD to continue their peacebuilding initiatives in Armenia and the region.

British Embassy Yerevan might decide on sharing the results of the evaluation with other stakeholders.

Deadline for applications: **7 February 2020.**

Selection date: **12 February 2020.**

The selected evaluator should be ready start their work by **17 February 2020** and complete the evaluation process with the submission of a final report.

4. Budget

Applicants should submit the proposal together with a budget plan for all costs including any travel expenses and VAT. All costs should be clear and transparent, with the number of days of each individual (if evaluator is an organization) working on the activity that they provide.

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5. Deliverables

The expected product from this evaluation is an analytical report in English with the following parts:

- ☐ Executive summary
- ☐ Introduction
- ☐ Brief project description
- ☐ Description of the evaluation methodology
- ☐ Analysis of the situation with regard to the outcomes and outputs
- ☐ Key findings, including good practices and lessons learned
- ☐ Conclusions and recommendations
- ☐ Annexes: ToRs, field visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.

The volume of the analytical report should be between 15 to 20 pages (single space) without annexes.

6. Request for Bids

Applicants should supply:

- ☐ Their full CV, highlighting their experience of conducting evaluations and other forms of written analysis;
- ☐ A cover letter outlining their interest in the assignment and describing their experience of data collection in different contexts including individual interviews and focus group discussions, as well as working with young men and women, persons in rural communities, and persons in fragile communities;
- ☐ A sample of their writing – preferably an evaluation report or other analytical piece;
- ☐ Daily rate for conducting the assignment, with all relevant taxation and deductions to be the responsibility of the applicant.

7. Expected Qualifications

The successful candidate will have the following qualifications:

- ☐ Several years of experience in project evaluation, and a clear evidence of conflict/peace related projects.
- ☐ Ability to produce well written analytical reports in English.
- ☐ Familiarity with the political situation in Armenia.
- ☐ Background knowledge of peacebuilding projects, particularly in Armenia and/or South Caucasus region.
- ☐ Degree to which the application corresponds to the ToR.
- ☐ Quality and the feasibility of the proposed methodology and work plan.
- ☐ Ability to adhere to the time constraints of the proposed evaluation.

Application Process

Applicants should submit their applications by **7 February 2020 (18:00 Yerevan time)** to the following addresses: artak.ayunts@peacefulchange.org, artur.ghazaryan@yccd.am. Please make sure to indicate "Evaluation - Progressing youth participation in Armenian on governance and peace" in the subject field.

Annex 2. Evaluation Matrix

EFFECTIVENESS			
EQ1. To what extent have the project outputs been achieved?			
Assumptions to be addressed	**Indicators**	**Sources of information**	**Methods and tools for data collection**
• The ToC with M&E frameworks are delineating clear milestones and targets. • The Project intended outputs were properly monitored • The output targets were achieved within each output areas with a likelihood of variability among them in terms of the level of achievement, namely the output one "Civil society participate in developing approaches to advocacy on 2250" and output two "Materials for engaging youth on matters of peace and security are adapted to Armenian context and tested in educational setting".	• Level of achievement of outputs against indicators/targets for each project milestone over specified time period. • Evidence of relevant project activities that are contributing to the outputs. • Extent to which the project has managed to present and utilise its activities and to produce results.	• Project ToC • Results Framework and progress reports • Other monitoring reports • Quantitative Data against indicators/targets (as outlined in the monitoring framework) over time within each of the outputs. • Qualitative Stakeholder perceptions of achievement of outputs within each output and activities.	• Document review • Key informant/stakeholder interviews • FGDs with beneficiary groups.
EQ2. To what extent did the project outputs contribute to the achievement of project outcome and to the CSSF strategic focus? And what was the degree of the achievement of the outcome?			
Assumptions to be addressed	**Indicators**	**Sources of information**	**Methods and tools for data collection**
• Outcome of the project "Armenian government and civil society endorse new approaches to bringing youth into matters of peace and security, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2250" matches/complements the Strategic Focus of the CSSF, namely Strategic Focus 2 "Working with governments, local and international partners and civil society to support the implementation of reforms, strengthen state (and non-state) institutions	• Level of contribution to the achievement of outcome using outcome indicators/targets as outlined in results monitoring reports over specified time period. • The number and type of activities which match or support the outcome. • Level of contribution to the CSSF Strategic Focus 2. • Stakeholder qualitative perceptions on impact of activities and output impact on outcome level.	• Project ToC • Results Framework and progress reports • Other monitoring reports • Quantitative Data against indicators/targets (as outlined in the monitoring framework) over time on the outcome level. • Qualitative Stakeholder perceptions of achievement on the outcome level. • Notes of meetings with government officials, giving detailed feedback on	• Document review • Key informant/stakeholder interviews • FGDs with beneficiary groups.

(including security actors) and improve conditions for civil society". ● The project outputs contributed to the achievement of project outcome and the Armenian government and civil society endorse new approaches to bringing youth into matters of peace and security, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2250. ● Although it is assumed that the majority of progress on outcome level can be attributed to the Project, it is likely that there are other factors which attributed to all progress towards outcome and strategic focus.	● Client/beneficiary qualitative perceptions on impact of activities and output impacts on outcome level. ● Number of recommendations generated by project on promoting UNSCR 2250 that endorsed by at least five Armenian organisations, who take active steps to advocate for these recommendations. ● Number of state officials who give considered response to recommendations generated by the project on promotion of UNSCR2250.	political and practical feasibility of implementing recommendations generated by the project. ● Electronic communication with officials giving detailed feedback of recommendations. ● Official state documents (declarations, policies, action plans, implementing guidelines, etc.) that incorporate recommendations generated by the project. ● Review of non-project activities and trends of other actors working in the area, if any (to extent possible).	

EQ3. To what extent the gender and conflict sensitivity approaches were considered in design and implementation of the project and reflected in its final outputs/outcome?

Assumptions to be addressed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for data collection
● The project ensured quantitative gender balance in activities and took appropriate measures to ensure the quality of female participation. ● The research component includes separate female focus groups to ensure substantive engagement on the issues. ● Discussions to generate and promote recommendations include organisations with a specific mission to promote gender equality. ● Recommendations are reviewed from the perspective of their practical impact on the lives of males and females. ● Training modules developed by the project are tested for their relevance on gender sensitivity.	● Scoring on OECD-DAC Gender Equality Marker (GEM) ● Male to female ratio and gender balance in project activities ● Number of male and female FGs ● Number of organization for gender equality engaged ● Existence of disaggregated data in project reporting ● Extent of gender mainstreaming in the training manual	● Project ToC ● Results Framework and progress reports ● Other monitoring reports ● Project notes and materials ● Training manual ● Qualitative feed-back from stakeholders ● Qualitative feed-back from beneficiaries	● Document review ● Key informant/stakeholder interviews ● FGDs with beneficiary groups.

EQ4. What are the unexpected results and the constraining/facilitating factors to achieve the results?

Assumptions to be addressed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for data collection
● There are significant constraints as well as facilitating factors that both impeded and aided the achievement of results.	● Existence and types of constraining/facilitating factors reported in project documents ● Qualitative perceptions of existence and types of constraining/facilitating factors by implementers ● Qualitative perceptions of existence and types of constraining/facilitating factors by donors ● Qualitative perceptions of existence and types of constraining/facilitating factors by partner/duty-bearers ● Qualitative perceptions of existence and types of constraining/facilitating factors by direct and indirect beneficiaries	● Project ToC ● Results Framework and progress reports ● Project notes and materials ● Qualitative feed-back from stakeholders ● Qualitative feed-back from beneficiaries	● Document review ● Key informant/stakeholder interviews ● FGDs with beneficiary groups.

EQ5. What are the lessons learned and is there any evidence of analyzing or making use of lessons learned during the project implementation?

Assumptions to be addressed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for data collection
● There is enough evidence of M&E with clearly formulated lessons learned and paths forward. ● There are some additional lessons learned which are not reported but can be analyzed based on generated knowledge and feed-back.	● Existence of lessons learned reported in project documents ● Qualitative perceptions of existence and types of lessons learned by implementers ● Qualitative perceptions of existence and types of lessons learned by donors ● Qualitative perceptions of existence and types of lessons learned by partner/duty-bearers ● Qualitative perceptions of existence and types of lessons learned by direct and indirect beneficiaries	● Project ToC ● Results Framework and progress reports ● Project notes and materials ● Qualitative feed-back from stakeholders ● Qualitative feed-back from beneficiaries	● Document review ● Key informant/stakeholder interviews ● FGDs with beneficiary groups.

EFFICIENCY			
EQ6. To what extent did the project make good use of its technical and human resources to pursue the achievement of results and value for money?			
Assumptions to be addressed	**Indicators**	**Sources of information**	**Methods and tools for data collection**
● The number of staff and their capacity has been adequate to ensure smooth implementation and monitoring of inputs and activities. ● The staff and resources allocated to the Project ensured value for money. ● Beneficiaries of the Project received the resources/products that were planned, to the level foreseen and in a timely and sustainable manner. ● The products planned were developed in a timely manner.	● Number of staff and their capacity ● Evidence that the planned resources were received as foreseen in project planning. ● Evidence that resources/products were received/delivered in a timely manner, as set out in the project work plan.	● Results Framework and progress reports ● Budget and activity reports ● Project notes and materials ● Qualitative feed-back from stakeholders ● Qualitative feed-back from beneficiaries	● Document review ● Key informant/stakeholder interviews ● FGDs with beneficiary groups.
SUSTAINABILITY			
EQ7. To what extent the benefits of the interventions are likely to continue in the future? And which of the benefits will last beyond the end of the project in longer-term?			
Assumptions to be addressed	**Indicators**	**Sources of information**	**Methods and tools for data collection**
● There is evidence that the piloted training materials can be used by trainers and experts in Armenia. ● The materials produced, including the research and the manual, are available to be used or are in use as reference materials for civil society and youth organisations. ● There is evidence that the materials and recommendations will be used in peacebuilding projects supporting	● Evidence of a handover process from implementers to other related executing parties regarding the project. ● Extent of ownership of each project output by various collaborating groups/bodies ● Evidence of political commitment and buy-in for project major focus. ● Measures of capacity building, especially training activities for youth	● Project ToC ● Results Framework and progress reports ● Project notes and materials ● Qualitative feed-back from stakeholders ● Qualitative feed-back from beneficiaries	● Document review ● Key informant/stakeholder interviews ● FGDs with beneficiary groups.

Nagorno-Karabakh conflict transformation and Armenia-Turkey normalisation process.	and the politicians.		

Annex 3. List of Interviewees

Layers	Sample	Interviewees	Number of Interviewees	Method
Implementers	PCi	Artak Ayunts Anthony Forman Craig Oliphant	3	Key informant semi-structured F2F and SKYPE individual interviews
	YCCD	Artur Ghazaryan	1 (canceled)	Key informant F2F individual interview
	Manual Developer and Trainer of Training	Tetyana Kalenychenko	1	Key informant semi-structured SKYPE individual interview
Donors	Embassy of the UK in Armenia	Marine Aramyan	1	Key informant semi-structured F2F individual interview
Partners/ Duty-bearers	MoFA	Kristine Mehrabekyan	1	Key informant semi-structured F2F individual interview
	MoESCS	Gohar Mamikonyan	1	Key informant semi-structured F2F individual interview
	Parliament Fraction "Lusavor Hayastan"	Anna Kostanyan	1	Key informant semi-structured F2F individual interview
Indirect Beneficiary	Teach for Armenia/previously YOU Network of youth organisations Youth Initiative Center Gyumri	Zaruhi Tonoyan Anna Yeghoyan	2	Key informant semi-structured F2F individual interview Key informant semi-structured SKYPE individual interview
Direct Beneficiaries	Trainers (ToT participants)	Tigran Zakaryan Arman Tonikyan	2	Group discussion in Yerevan
Direct beneficiaries	Young women and men, participants of trainings from Tavush region	6-7 per group, total of 2 FGs	12-14 (canceled due to Coronovirus outbreak)	FGDs in Dilijan, Tavush region
Total number of KIIs			10	
Total number of interviewees for primary data collection			12	

Annex 4. List of Documents Reviewed

1. PCi Project Proposal, February 21, 2019
2. Research Report Youth Participation in Decision-Making and Peacebuilding in Armenia, PCi and YCCD, Yerevan 2019
3. Manual in Armenian: Youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding, PCI and YCCD, 2020
4. PCi/YCCD Progress Report Q1, 2019
5. PCi/YCCD Progress Report Q2, 2019
6. PCi/YCCD Progress Report Q3, 2019
7. PCi/YCCD Activity Report from the Study Visit, PCi/YCCD, December 04, 2019
8. PCi/YCCD Activity Report from the Round Table on Key Messages, October 30, 2019
9. PCi/YCCD Activity Report from the Round Table on Peacebuilding, July 19, 2019
10. PCi/YCCD Activity Report from the Round Table 4, December 19, 2019
11. PCi/YCCD Activity Report from the Round Table with Youth Organizations, July 11, 2019
12. PCi/YCCD Activity Report from the Training of Trainers, August 19, 2019
13. PCi/YCCD Activity Report from the Trainers Briefing, November 13, 2019
14. PCi/YCCD Activity Report from the Trainers Briefing, October 29, 2019
15. PCi/YCCD Meeting Notes, Meeting with Trainers, December 12, 2019
16. PCi/YCCD Presentation of Recommendations, ppt material
17. PCI Meeting notes
18. Participation and Attendance Lists of the Round Tables
19. Participation and Attendance Lists of the ToT
20. Assessment and feed-back forms from Project participants
    Electronic sources of media publications:
21. https://www.facebook.com/dav.xach/posts/1830469233753523
22. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1ly_iyP9MI 1:07:20 – 1:07:46